

TVA is updating the 2011 Natural Resource Plan (NRP), which contained six Resource Areas centered on stewardship activities. The 2020 NRP has been expanded to include ten proposed Focus Areas that tell a comprehensive story of TVA's work in natural resources. The NRP is a strategic document that, over the next 15 to 20 years, will guide the direction of TVA's resource stewardship on the 11,000 miles of shoreline and 293,000 acres of public land under its care. Cultural Resource Management is one of the ten proposed Focus Areas.

TVA has a rich history in cultural resource management that goes back to its establishment in 1933. As a federal agency, TVA is responsible for identifying, managing, and protecting cultural resources that are found on its property or affected by its actions. These cultural resources may include historic buildings, structures, sites or objects, archaeological resources, Native American burials, funerary objects, sacred items, and other historic resources. Laws, executive orders, and associated regulations are in place that obligate TVA to protect these important sites and resources. These include the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), and the Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA).



Benefits:

- Ensures effective and sustainable protection of sensitive, non-renewable cultural resources
- Improves relationships with stakeholders that attach cultural value to TVA-managed lands
- Improves compliance with all applicable laws protecting cultural resources on federal land
- Increases education and awareness of the importance of protecting cultural resources through public outreach and community engagement
- Increases understanding of TVA's history and our role in the continuing development of the Tennessee Valley

Objectives:

- Comply with all federal laws related to cultural resource management on federal lands or on lands affected by TVA actions
- Increase our knowledge base regarding significant cultural resources on TVA lands through identification, evaluation, and documentation
- Protect and preserve significant archaeological and historic resources through improved and enhanced management practices such as monitoring, shoreline stabilization, archaeological curation, and enforcement of federal laws
- Provide educational and outreach opportunities within TVA communities concerning the necessity of protecting cultural resources and sharing the unique history of the Tennessee Valley
- Partner with stakeholders, such as federally recognized Indian tribes, whose ancestral lands fall within the Tennessee Valley

Programs

The 2011 NRP contained nine programs that made up the Cultural Resources resource area. The 2020 NRP proposes that this resource area be restructured to include the same functions in eight programs in the Cultural Resource Stewardship focus area. These programs help ensure compliance with applicable laws and support the sound stewardship of archaeological and historic resources that fall within the agency's management responsibility. This focus area more consistently aligns the NRP with how TVA manages the cultural resources of the Tennessee Valley.

PRESERVATION PROGRAM

NHPA requires federal agencies to establish a preservation program to identify, evaluate, and nominate historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places and manage these resources in a way that preserves their historic integrity.

ARPA ENFORCEMENT

ARPA protects archaeological sites on Indian and federal lands. The Act prohibits the removal or damage of archaeological resources and provides both criminal and civil penalties for violations.

SECTION 106 COMPLIANCE

Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects its undertakings will have on historic properties (e.g., historic structures or archaeological sites eligible for the National Register). Agencies must provide consulting parties an opportunity to comment on such undertakings prior to approval.

NAGPRA COMPLIANCE

NAGPRA provides for the protection of Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects vital to Native American cultural identity (cultural items). It provides a process whereby TVA can return cultural items in its control to Native American lineal descendants or federally recognized Native American Tribes.

THOUSAND EYES ARCHAEOLOGICAL OUTREACH

ARPA requires agencies to develop programs to increase public awareness of the need to protect archaeological sites located on its public lands. TVA's Thousand Eyes program provides educational opportunities across the Valley and a volunteer site stewardship program.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND PROTECTION

This program seeks to identify archaeological sites on TVA land that are being threatened by looting, erosion, or other impacts in order to identify the appropriate action plans for protection. Protection efforts include increased monitoring, signage, stabilization, gating, and increased patrols under the ARPA Enforcement program.

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

This program includes consultation and partnerships with tribes to protect, manage, and learn from the significant Native American archaeological sites located in the Tennessee Valley.

CORPORATE HISTORY

The corporate history program maintains a record of TVA's rich history and provides educational and outreach opportunities to promote TVA's historical significance to the region, the nation, and the world.

